

2020 Eckhart Tolle Journeys into Stillness HemiSync 2020 Hoopla Audiobook

[Speaker 2] (0:11 - 0:30)

Sounds True presents Journeys into Stillness. Experience Eckhart Tolle guided meditations with HemiSync, with author and spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle. And now session one, You Are Consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (1:14 - 39:23)

What meditation really is, is becoming aware that there's more to you than meets the eye. Becoming aware that there's more to who you are, more than what is apparent on the surface. It's also true there's more to you than what you see when you look in the mirror.

As one writer put it, what is essential is invisible to the eye. So it all means what is essential to who you are, is invisible. What is invisible?

Then your mind, the thoughts that you have, and the emotions, feelings, these things are invisible. Often they come out as words, as an energy emanation, the type of thoughts that a person has, habitually becomes energetic emanation of that person, the emotional field also. So you can feel certain energies coming from people, positive, negative.

So it is invisible, but it enters the realm of the visible quite often. And the thoughts and emotions make up the person or the personality. So you have the physical body, which is visible, then you have the thoughts and emotions, which are not visible as such, but still manifest here through words and actions and reactions, and energy emanation.

All that is still your surface self. The physical body, thoughts that go through your mind continuously, feelings, emotions, they really are not the depths of who you are. They're all part of your surface consciousness.

For most people, that's where their sense of identity stops. Habitual thoughts, habitual stories, habitual reactions. So people derive their sense of who they are from thinking and emotions.

Mind made entity, which is the ego, and it's all surface. It is not who you are in the depths of your being. Meditation is becoming aware that there's a deeper dimension to who you are than the physical world, the physical body, or your thoughts or emotions.

Why we're here? Not to believe that there is a deeper dimension to who you are. It would just be another thought.

But to actually realize firsthand that dimension where from a viewpoint of mental conceptualization, you cannot explain who you are anymore. There's an unknown dimension to who you are, and that's the depths of your being. You become aware that there is a background to that experience, which is a little bit like the canvas on which the artist paints.

The difference here is, of course, this metaphorical painting, which is the experience that you are having at this moment, is not fixed. The painting, once it's done, is fixed on the canvas. This is a fluid, continuously moving painting, which is your present experience.

In addition to the experience you're having, there is a silent presence that has no form. You can't grasp it. You can't analyze it.

In fact, you can't know anything about it, and yet it's there. It's the one thing that is beyond doubt about the reality of this moment. Everything you're experiencing at this moment could be a dream.

It evaporates quickly, dissolves, and then something new appears. The dream is happening right now. What is it that enables the reality of this moment to be?

Since I use the word to be, we could say it is the being that is behind everything. The silent presence, which is being. That silent presence is the essence of you.

You become aware of that underlying silent space, which has no form, which is probably why the Buddha called it emptiness. Emptiness could also be translated as formlessness, the essence of who you are, which is much deeper than the person, and is not really as you go deeper into yourself, you come to a dimension that transcends yourself. You are suddenly consciously connected with the universal self, the source of it all.

The source of who you are is the source of the entire universe. And when you become aware of that indwelling silent presence, for a moment the canvas becomes blank again. The painting is temporarily dissolved, and suddenly the canvas becomes aware of itself.

As things reappear on the canvas again, further experiences happen to you. You start thinking again, interacting with the world. You can begin to live in a way that enables you to be aware of yourself, even while you're having your own life experiences, to be aware of yourself as the canvas on which your various experiences, good, bad, indifferent, happen.

So you're not just aware of the depths of who you are as the silent presence, you're not just aware of that when you are so-called meditating, but you can be aware of that all the time. Even while you're thinking, there's always a part of you that's background to your thinking. The awareness behind the thinking, the silent space between two thoughts.

And it is you, it is consciousness, it is awareness. In your daily life, there's always a background of stillness or peace, something that is not touched by the comings and goings, gain and loss, turmoil, or whatever is happening in your outer life experience. Something that is not touched by that, that is inner peace.

It's not just peace, it's also a sense of joyful presence. It becomes most amazing when you have that, even while things are not going well around you. Feel that strange peace in the background.

What's that? For some people, that realization comes to them spontaneously when they suddenly lose everything that they thought was important in their lives, possessions, position, relationship. And some of those people suddenly, when everything that made up the surface reality that they identified with as themselves is taken away, either they go insane or become dreadfully unhappy, or they suddenly transcend the surface reality.

For the simple reason that the surface reality becomes so completely unsatisfying, those were probably the first people who in the distant past who ever realized the transcendent dimension within them. People who lost everything. I believe some of those people then began to show others what is possible.

And then they started their first monasteries or ashrams where they tried to repeat that realization that had come to those people spontaneously because they lost everything. And they saw what is possible for a human being to be in touch with the transcendent dimension. Then they tried to show it to others.

And they said, okay, you come and live in this monastery or ashram and you give up your possessions and your personal relationships. In other words, they tried to repeat the things that were taken away from these original people. They tried to repeat the experience of loss.

The good news is you do not need that extreme experience of loss because right here and now you can realize this deeper underlying essence that is essentially who you are. But it's more than who you are. It connects you to something vast.

It connects you to the intelligence that underlies the sense-perceived universe. Liberation, which is a word that is sometimes used in certain spiritual traditions. Liberation.

Or in the teachings of Jesus, suddenly you are saved from the suffering that inevitably accompanies a deluded sense of self. What are you saved from? You are saved from an absurdly limited sense of identity.

And you're saved from the suffering that inevitably accompanies a deluded sense of self. A sense of that believes implicitly that I am this physical body and my thoughts and emotions. And there's nothing else.

If my thoughts clash with your thoughts, then you become my enemy. All these absurd delusions arise through an absurdly limited sense of who you are. So liberation, salvation is transcending free of that delusion.

So you no longer seek your identity through your thinking, your narratives, your stories, neither the individual narratives nor the collective narratives of your tribe or religion or political party. You can still have your narratives. It's fine.

But they are not who you are. As you may know, the question that is sometimes asked, who am I? Make it into a meditation.

So, who am I? Now, you can't go into your thinking. Let's see.

No. You ask, who am I? And then you experience the silent space after those words.

The true answer is to be found in the stillness that follows the question. That's the answer.

[Speaker 3] (39:29 - 41:52)

Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?

[Speaker 1] (43:15 - 1:00:07)

Who am I? Becoming aware that you are conscious right now. That's a strange thing.

There's no content to that. There's simply a presence. And for that to happen, there needs to be the cessation of thought.

And this is my invitation to you. You do not need to think continuously in your daily life. If your mind tells you that if you do not think and do not worry, then your life is going to collapse.

That is not true. It's a lie. But your mind might either explicitly or implicitly say, I need to really think about my life.

Thinking has its place. It's a wonderful tool. It can be used for manifesting.

It can be used for creating. It's a tool. But if it takes you over, you're identified with a tool, then it becomes to possess you.

And that's a terrible limitation. The new state of consciousness is a mixture of thought and spaciousness, so that you can go about your daily life, walking from point A to point B, in that state of simple aware presence. Let's do it now.

I'm calling it do, best not doing involved. Simply become aware of yourself as you sit here, just as I am aware of myself as a conscious presence. This is a very strange thing.

You cannot become an object to yourself. Everything else is an object that arises in your consciousness, an object of consciousness. Knowing yourself, you cannot be an object in your own consciousness.

So you cannot know yourself in a subject-object relationship at the deepest level. You can only know yourself as the eternal subject. There is a space of stillness in that moment of knowing yourself as the essence identity.

There is a live sense of stillness and presence. Let's separate. Let's just say my two hands, this is thought, your thinking, and here's a space of no thought, just awareness.

You can't define what that is. You can't think about it. You can only be it.

Stillness is one word we could use to point to it. Stillness has nothing to do whether there's noise outside or not. Inner stillness is the cessation of thinking without loss of consciousness.

That is, realizing yourself as the unconditioned consciousness, because everything else is conditioned by the past. But that is the unconditioned in you. That is your essence identity.

Simply become so alert that thinking stops by itself. One way you can do it is by becoming aware of sense perceptions, hugely aware of sense perceptions. I give the example in *The Power of Now* of a cat watching the mouse hole and the cat watching the mouse hole in the state of absolute attention.

This state of awareness, consciousness, that's the only thing in your life that you cannot question, the only thing that is absolutely and undoubtedly real. Everything else you can question, for example, whether our gathering here is a dream or not, you don't really know. It could be that you are dreaming and there's a man suggesting to you that you might be dreaming.

You cannot know for sure that this life that you're experiencing is not a kind of dream. And from one perspective, it is a kind of dream. Sometimes I like to look at old photographs taken in 1900, early days of photography, street scenes or gatherings.

You can go to second-hand shops and they sell old photographs. You can buy one for a penny or two. You have no idea who these people are, nor has anybody else have an idea who these people are.

But they're running around the city street excited about this or that. And then there's people sitting around a table eating and laughing in this old photo. Where is that now?

It has evaporated like a dream. Nobody even remembers who they are. It quickly evaporates.

So there is a dream-like quality to human existence, any existence. So you could say, okay, maybe it's all a dream. That may well be.

But one thing you cannot doubt, that is that you are conscious. Because if you're not conscious, there couldn't be a dream. A dream can only arise in the light of consciousness.

So the one thing, whether or not it's a dream or not, it becomes irrelevant. The only thing that matters is whether you can realize what the essence of the dream is. Consciousness.

You can only realize it directly, here and now, as this. So this realization of, we could call inner stillness, of spaciousness, of presence, of, well, there's a term that's very popular these days, and that's a good thing. It's called mindfulness, which I use almost never, except when I explain why I don't use it.

I don't use it because it seems to imply that your mind is full. But it's not what mindfulness is. It really should be called mind emptiness.

The entire practice of, for example, people find certain esoteric spiritual practices very strange and hard to understand. Zen, what does it all mean? What's Zen all about?

Cessation of thinking without loss of consciousness. That's what the Zen master's trying to show you, non-conceptually. The Zen master became famous because when he was asked, please explain the meaning of Zen, all he would do is raise his finger and look at you.

Sometimes it takes a long time before realizing that it doesn't take time to know who you are. That's the paradox. I'm not saying don't go to a Zen monastery.

Perhaps you have to. But it may take time to realize that it does not take time, but it doesn't have to take time. It's here and now.

I'm saying this to especially the spiritual seekers among you who have made it your life purpose to seek whatever it is, the ultimate spiritual experience of transformation. And the very seeking has become, without you knowing it, the greatest obstacle to spiritual realization. By being in the seeking mode for some spiritual realization or awakening, you're in basically the same state of consciousness that everybody else is in, except they are seeking through material possessions, achievement, relationships.

They're seeking there. It's a mind structure, the seeking mode. And spiritual seekers adopt that.

They see themselves as more spiritual than the one who is seeking after the latest model of that particular car or seeking life partner who enhances their sense of self, the trophy

husband, the trophy wife, the beautiful arm hang. And never being satisfied, because if you're in the seeking mode, you get stuck in the seeking mode.

[Speaker 2] (1:00:16 - 1:00:22)

Our program continues with session two, from doing to being.

[Speaker 1] (1:01:07 - 1:45:02)

You have to have the courage to enter that space in which you do not know anything about who you are, letting go of attachment to opinions that you have had about yourself, seeing yourself as a success or failure or mixture in life, seeing yourself as a spiritual person or as not enough spiritual person or superior to others or inferior to others, any kind of comparison. This is the liberation that comes when you find the courage to be in the space of not knowing in which there's simply a space of awareness in you, where before there was a stream of thinking. Now there is a space of not thinking.

I invite you to find that in yourself, just that. The same space is here in me, and the words come out of it. When there are no words, there's no thinking.

The mind only operates the moment words come. And that's a precious thing of finding in yourself the space of emptiness in Buddhist terms, fullness in Christian terms, but not full of things, full of life, the fullness of life. It doesn't mean many things.

It means life before it becomes many things. It's basically the state before the big bang, which still subsists in you now, before the universe came into being. They say before the universe came into being, there was an empty space or something like that.

There was no time and there was nothing, no thing. That's all you can say. You cannot then start thinking about that no thing because there's nothing to think about.

And yet the origin of all things was never lost and isn't really touched by time. So to know who you are beyond concepts, embrace the not knowing in yourself. In other words, thoughts subside for a moment, and then you're getting closer to the essence of who you are.

The strange thing is there is something that is still present there. I say something, but it's not something, but language is limited because language is about the world of things. There's something, even when you're not thinking, you're actually present.

Even if you were not perceiving at that time, you could say, yes, I'm present because there's sense perception happening. Even if you close your eyes, and even if you put ear plugs in, or there's total silence, you close your eyes, all visual sense perceptions have become obliterated. And there isn't noise going on either.

So before you were aware of visual sense perceptions, and you were aware of this voice. And now there's neither visual sense perceptions, nor auditory sense perceptions for a moment. What's left?

Ah, you are still there. The amazing thing is even if you're not reminding yourself of your past or your future or your present life situation or your name, or looking at your body, there is something that is still present. You know that, but it is not differentiated.

It doesn't have a history, what is still present. It has no past and no future to it. You can't really say much about it.

You can't define it further because it is what is called empty. It is emptiness. It is formlessness.

It is formless consciousness. If you find that in yourself, and it's always there underneath the movement of form, which is thinking and emotions and even sense perceptions, underneath it is always there. If you find that even the most unprofitable life has become redeemed, because you have found the one thing that really matters.

Yourself. All that's happening here is we become comfortable with nothing happening. So that we can shift our consciousness from doing to being.

Doing is not just physical doing, which obviously we are not engaged in right now. The mouse is moving, but that's all. Or you may be twitching a bit, but basically we are sitting or lying.

That's physical doing, so we stop doing on the external. And more importantly, the mind. So we are here to experience, get a taste of, or perhaps even more than that, go deeply into the state of being, which in itself has no content.

It's a bit like having lived in a room full of furniture, stuff, for many years. Always being worried about polishing it or getting more stuff or getting rid of this stuff, talking about the stuff in your room, and for the first time you become aware also of the space of the room, which is the essence without which there wouldn't be a room. And you realize the furniture in the room is secondary to the space in the room.

But space you cannot grasp. You sense it, you become aware of it, you sense the presence of the space, and to do that, you can't be thinking. Thinking is to do with the furniture in the room.

Thinking is never to do with the space in the room. A different faculty, inner faculty, is required to sense the space wherever you are. That is not thinking.

Most humans still don't know that they potentially have that ability or that faculty. We are here for some of you to awaken that, and for many others to deepen it. So let's go

back to the room.

When you become aware of the space in the room, you might notice it's very peaceful to be aware of the space. There is suddenly an added dimension to where you are, because before you were concerned with the furniture and whatever filled the room. Every bit of stuff has a history.

The old room that you've lived in for many years suddenly becomes peaceful in the moment that you can sense the space of the room rather than always focusing on the different bits and pieces in the room. Suddenly you take in the totality which transcends what's in it, the spaciousness of it, there's a sense of peace and a peaceful presence. You could say it's in the room, but of course it's in you.

In our analogy, the furniture in the room, the bits and pieces, the stuff, corresponds of course to the content of your mind. Whatever is occupying your mind is the stuff, the furniture. Every item wants your attention.

You keep the old stuff alive by continuously giving it your attention. If you become aware of the space in the room, you withdraw attention from what is in the room. It could be described as the essence of the room.

Without any room there's no room, there's space. The spaciousness, the presence, presence that you can sense as if it were an external presence in filling the room is also in you. Now this is very deeply peaceful in many traditions.

Let's call it the presence of God that all the mystics, whether Christian or Buddhist or Hindu or Sufis, they all point to that. It's not the ideological God, not the person, but that which underlies all manifestation, the eternal. So the eternal is both within and without.

The moment you notice that presence outside of you, you're no longer focusing on individual things. You're focusing on the space between things and you sense that as a silent presence. You can't say much about it.

Some poets have written about it quite beautifully. Wordsworth, the English poet, went out into nature and wrote beautiful things all pointing to that. But the moment you notice it outside of you, it's within you the same.

Your most fundamental responsibility is to find that which is beyond the stuff, to access that dimension in you. That's why you're here. That's what the universe wants through you to awaken to that dimension, to be it consciously.

First it seems that it's something outside of you. It's the space in the room or how here in nature and then you realize, oh, it's within me too. And it's more essentially me than anything else.

That's where the whole feeling of who you are actually originates in that deep sense of being, of presence. And then it gets mixed up with things, with stuff. And then you sense the through the stuff.

And then possession can give you a little bit of aliveness. You can sense your car if you just got it after a while it wears off. If you just got it, it can give you a little bit of sense of deeper sense of identity.

Any identity sense of essential self comes from, is from the formless dimension of presence. And for most people, it can only a little bit filter through all the things in their lives. And it's never very satisfying because it's obscured and it's mistaken for the thing.

It's like having a lampshade. You're mistaking the lampshade for the light. And then you attach yourself to the lampshade and not realizing what you love about the lampshade is the light that shines through it.

Whenever anything upsets you in life, or you get despondent or angry or whatever, then you lost awareness of that presence. The presence is obscured. And something then in your life is regarded as absolutely important.

The lampshade, you don't realize how insubstantial that is. And you're not aware of the light in your life. You are the light said Jesus, the light of the world.

Nothing in life can satisfy you except this. No, you don't have to believe that. I'm not saying believe me, nothing is going to satisfy you.

Either you know that already, because you've tried many times to be satisfied by lampshades, or you don't know it yet, which is fine too. You experience a little bit more frustration and suffering. But look for real satisfaction in whatever fills your life, in things, in people, in situations, in positions, in what other people think of you, or better opinion of yourself in your mind.

Begin to live this, live in what we could call continuous connectedness with being. Then you can enjoy also the furniture in the room. And then the famous word that we know is non-attachment.

Of course implies that you're rooted in something deeper or more real than whatever things you might be attached to. Very often the attachment is attachment to a thought, that's the biggest attachments. Non-attachment is not really possible unless you are rooted in something more fundamental than stuff that you might be attached to.

So I wouldn't even say practice non-attachment. No, find the essence of who you are and then, as a natural consequence, that attachment to things and people and places and situations, success and failure and so on and so on, falls away by itself. So true happiness is deeper than what is conventionally called happiness.

It's a sense of deep, alive peace, which can be there even if on the outer level you experience a wave of unhappiness, such as would be the case if somebody close to you dies. The central part of all this is becoming comfortable with, of course, not thinking, just being, just awareness. That's the inner space of awareness right now.

Do you need to think? Do you need to fill this space with thoughts?

[Speaker 3] (1:45:02 - 1:45:02)

No.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:04 - 2:03:43)

It's a life without thoughts. You can sense your own aliveness without telling yourself anything, being it. We call it meditation, but that's not really what it is.

Meditation is another concept that creates a compartment in your mind or your life, different from other things. But we're not really here to do a meditation as such, but to realize the essential you, or to put it more accurately and directly, to realize the essential I. Because one could say, and don't take this too literally, because whatever language one uses is always somewhat wrong.

So they're only approximations. They are only helpful hints used temporarily. Whatever words we use here are helpful pointers, not the absolute truth, can't be expressed in words.

All pointers, of course, have certain limitations. Knowing that I can use one or two pointers, we could say then that there's two of you here or at any time. There's the I that is circumstantial, relative, fleeting, and it's not a unified body.

It includes all kinds of sub-I's and patterns. It's form, the form of who you are, a psychological form, physical form, conditioned by circumstances, reacting to circumstances, having fears and desires. And then there's the deeper I, which one could say is the dreamer of all the circumstances, and the events, and the experiences that make up a person's so-called life.

So I'm comparing then circumstantial existence to a kind of dream, which is what it is, because it dissolves fairly quickly. Not only your life, but every event and circumstance in your life changes continuously. And that's why we can compare it to a kind of dream, which also is not substantial.

It's also fleeting and subject to change and subject to impermanence, just as this world that looks deceptively solid, but is also subject to constant change. Physicists agree, if you look deeply to matter, you see that there is ultimately no solid matter, only energy fluctuations. But the energy fluctuations appear to us, it's an illusion, they appear to us

as solid.

So there's a solidity to the world that is not absolutely real, it's a part of the illusion. And then people always get shocked when they realize how fleeting it all is. And whenever you think your life has a secure basis, very quickly you realize, oh, it wasn't that secure.

Because something happens, you realize that sense of security that one seeks in circumstances is also an illusion. So the deeper I is that which illuminates the circumstances, creates them in a way, like a dream creates the dream. The question is whether that deeper I, which is the light behind it all, without which there would be no world, question is whether the deeper I is totally lost in the dream, or whether it knows itself as the deeper I, even while the dream continues.

Lucid living, similar to lucid dreaming, which some people are interested in, which is staying conscious while you're dreaming and knowing that you're dreaming. But here we're talking about lucid living, which is to know yourself as the light behind it all, the presence behind it all. And to sense that presence that has no form as the life that you are, or the consciousness that you are.

It's no longer the separate you that's behind it all. Now the important thing is to know that, not conceptually, but in the background. In all the years I've used many different pointers to point to it.

Every pointer is of course limits it, it's not that. But it can be temporarily helpful. I've said the stillness in the background, the space, inner space, the spaciousness, or the light.

Light, Jesus also used that term to point to it. You are the light of the world. There's the world, and there's the light in which it appears.

You are the light of the world. Is the light God? Well, if we use that term, I would say the light is the emanation of God, in the same way that the sunlight emanates from the sun and is not really separate from the sun.

God is the absolute unmanifested, timeless. And from the absolute unmanifested, something shines into this world and creates this world. I've used other pointers also.

Yes, stillness, inner space, spaciousness, presence, or in negative terms, the cessation of thinking, the end of compulsive thinking. And that's why we're here, to realize that possibility. What's left of you when you stop thinking?

And of course, I'm inviting you to stop thinking now. You can't make it happen, but you can allow yourself to just be present. There's the essential I.

You enter that dimension, power flows into you. You could call it spiritual power. It may not immediately become transformed into something in this world.

It could become creative action, could become an emanation of love towards your fellow human beings. It could become other things as it flows into this world, but it doesn't immediately necessarily have to do that. You're plugged into the source of all power.

And it's not the power that the ego would call power, which is noisy. It's silent power, which from the point of view of the ego looks like weakness. The dotted thing sometimes compares that power to water.

It seems very soft, but it can erode the hardest rock and does. And that of course is the power of now. Don't expect immediate results.

Be content with opening yourself to this influx of silent power. The ups and downs of circumstantial existence. One day everything is going great.

Next day things collapse and then it's fine again. New things arise. And while all that happens, you feel yourself, you sense yourself as the presence behind it all.

You don't lose yourself in the circumstantial I. You stay rooted in the essential I. You are essentially that, of course.

Now they are not absolutely separate. The circumstantial I is the waves on the surface of being, the ripples and waves. Of course there's no division between the waves on the surface of the ocean and the ocean.

It just sometimes looks as if every wave had a separate existence. So the secret of life is, here it comes, in any situation, can you be there not only as a circumstantial entity, the person, but also as the deeper presence of I. To know yourself as that while you participate in circumstantial existence.

There may still be ups and downs and even happiness and unhappiness, but not touching you anymore in the core of your being. Neither the happiness nor the unhappiness. There's something deeper than happiness, which is permanent peace.

A vitally and vibrantly alive peace could also be called joy or love. In Indians, Brijal is called Sat Chit Ananda, which is being, consciousness, bliss. Awareness of being, Chit, consciousness, Ananda, bliss.

The joy of sensing the being that you are. The awareness of being. The awareness of the one life that you are.

To sense that even while you go about your business. Circumstantial business. That's the challenge and that's the secret.

[Speaker 2] (2:04:17 - 2:04:22)

Our program continues with session three, Transcending the Self.

[Speaker 1] (2:04:23 - 3:07:01)

So our purpose, of course, just to remind you is not to become still. Then you create a problem, but you'll discover that you are still already underneath the thinking. Your sense of identity, the sense of who you are, derives from the stillness underneath the thinking.

That's the essence of your sense of I am, or your sense of being. Most people don't know that because that essence shines through the veil of thinking and emotions. You could also call it the light that shines through the essence of who you are.

I am, that sense of I am. And most people don't know that it derives from that which is deeper than thinking in you. And they think the thinking and the emotions are who they are.

So they confuse the I am with what happens in their minds. And that's the state we call ignorance. Nothing to do with education.

How much or how little. As I speak, really every word or every sentence is a pointer to that dimension. But as we sit here together, be aware of the gaps between the words.

That's more important than the words. Because that's what the words point to. What is that gap?

It's stillness. Space. The light of consciousness itself.

Formless. Spirit. Nothing in it to understand.

Nothing you can work out to get closer to it. Work out conceptually, mentally, by asking another question and waiting for another answer. You have to give up trying to understand spirit.

God. Even understand yourself. So as we sit here, thinking is not important.

If it arises, allow it to arise. But be the presence behind the thinking. Be the deeper I am that you are already.

Otherwise the I am gets lost in the thinking. And then the thinking assumes the pseudo identity of I am. Dreadful condition.

Normal, of course. So as we sit here, we have the courage to embrace the state of not knowing. There's no knowing, no judgment.

It's a wonderful liberation when you no longer need to look to mind activity to tell you who you are. And that's why we are here, to access that state of connectedness with being. The depths of being.

You are this formless light that shines through anything that arises in your life. It's formless. So there's always, at any moment, now, there's always that which happens in your life.

Here, very little happens. Just the words that are being perceived. Peripheral sense perceptions.

Where you are sitting, perhaps the periphery. You're aware of that a little bit. Maybe some thoughts come occasionally.

So there's always that which happens. And then there's always something more vital. And that is, we could say, the light in which that which happens appears.

That is also the only thing that is, that cannot be doubted. You can doubt the reality of whatever is happening around you. And of course, it has a dreamlike quality.

It comes and goes. But you cannot doubt, because it's immediately obvious that you are conscious. Or that there is consciousness.

Even if it is a dream, there is a light in which that dream appears. That's the timeless. And knowing that, you can be awake in the dream.

Because things continue to happen in your so-called life. But you can be aware of the dimension of depth. Aware of formless consciousness itself, like now.

And this is the meaning of what you read in the New Testament, where Jesus says, you are the light of the world. That is, to know yourself as that, not conceptually, but directly. To know yourself as the light that underlies everything.

To know yourself as consciousness is liberation from the world. Liberation from taking apparent reality as something that is absolutely real. It is not absolutely real.

It is borrowed from the light of consciousness. It's like the light of the moon. The moon has no light of its own.

It looks like that, but it's the sunlight. So the world has no life of its own. You have no life of your own.

There is no such thing as my life. You are an expression of the one life. So I don't have a life.

I am life. Not my life, just life. The moment you say my, you create a duality.

Me and life. You can learn one thing, so to speak. Discover your ability, to put it in the most simple terms, to stop thinking without going to sleep.

Or allow thinking to stop. If you discover that you're able to do that, to allow thinking to

stop and be present, you don't need to read any more spiritual books. That's the essence of spirituality.

Because that's the realization of the formless dimension of consciousness. And that's spirit. When you realize that's who you are, what comes and goes in your so-called life is only of secondary importance.

If what comes and goes in your life is of primary importance to you, in other words, there's nothing else, that's a dreadful state of ignorance and suffering. But if you realize that what comes and goes is secondary, it may be important, but it is not absolutely important. It is relatively important.

No matter what you are doing, what discussions you are having with somebody, what you're dealing with in your life, the problems in your life, or an extension of that in the life of the community, the collective, the country, the world, all that is relatively important. But not absolutely. It comes and goes.

Absolutely important is to be rooted in that which doesn't come and go. And only from there can you see that what comes and goes in your life is of secondary importance. And that is spiritual realization.

I sometimes speak of bringing the transcendent dimension into your life, without which your life, no matter what you achieve, is very limited. The transcendent dimension is not an achievement. It's more like a discovery, because it's already here.

So it's not something you need to get, which would imply future, but the discovery of something that's already here. No matter who you are or what your function is in this world, this is about the most important thing there is. So we are here right now, so that you can deepen your access to it.

Or some of you discover for yourself what it is. Discover it directly. Experience yourself as presence, the presence that you are, that is the transcendence of the person.

And the transcendent of the person and the discovery of yourself as presence is here and now, when you become so alert, so awake, you discover that alertness, wakefulness in you. There's no thinking. There are spaces in between thinking of simple, alert presence.

As that space opens up, you suddenly realize there's a depth to you that you didn't know before. You have to have enough courage to go there, because you have to give up everything that you thought you knew, thoughts that you identified with. So you step into the unknown.

You become as nothing. And I like that English word. You don't have that in other languages.

The English word nothing consists of no thing. Thing meaning form. You realize the presence of that which has no form.

As you experience yourself as presence, an alert consciousness, you don't know who you are anymore. And that may require some courage to go there. So when you look at something, the presence is looking, not the person.

How do you know whether the presence is looking at something or the person? When you don't interpret mentally what you're looking at, that's presence. But you're very alert or you listen to something, but you don't interpret it.

There's just the listening and the presence without which there could be no listening. Then in little situations in your life, you discover that it's much more pleasant to be there as the presence rather than as the person. So if you can encounter people, situations, places as a simple presence without taking a position towards them, allow everything to be in this moment as it is.

The ego doesn't like that. The ego is the mind-made self that lives on judgment. If you relinquish judgment, the ego disappears.

You realize that life becomes a much more pleasant experience without that person continuously judging everything and everybody. And you connect if you have that courage or you've suffered so much through your own judgments that you just can't take anymore and you go into just presence. That presence is also intelligence.

It does not originate in your body, in your physical brain, but there is a relationship, of course, between it and your brain. You could use the analogy of a radio transmitter. The radio transmits something.

It doesn't produce it. But when you destroy the radio, it seems that it's gone. It isn't.

It's not just the absence of judgment. It also begins to operate in your life. In other words, the way in which you deal with things and situations and people changes because a greater intelligence, not the egoic mind, deals with situations and people.

It's also the source of all creativity. Our focus here is the transcendent dimension itself. The rest looks after itself, how it manifests in your life and so on.

Spiritual awakening means the person shrinks and presence grows. But enough of the person remains to be an effective instrument for presence. Sometimes the presence can speak through you or inspire your mind.

Other times it's just an emanation, just a peaceful, vibrantly alive space. The person becomes an instrument through which presence can express itself. You no longer confuse that instrument, which is really predominantly the mind, with who you truly are.

As the awakening process continues to unfold in you, you find more and more situations in your life where you are the presence predominantly rather than the person. Less and less judgment comes into your mind and is replaced with just an aliveness. It's not easy.

Don't underestimate the momentum behind the ego, the pull of the ego, which has been there for thousands of years. It will reassert itself at first quite frequently. And when the time comes, when you are able, as it asserts itself, you can still be there as the observing presence.

That's a huge step forward. There's a light in you, not a visual light, a presence that is essentially who you are. It has nothing to do with your past or future.

We are here to become familiar with being that presence consciously. If it feels good and right for you this moment to be here and almost, let's say, to recognize the truth of it, that means that's it. And you can't say where if there's nowhere.

If it feels irritating or boring to be here, that means you have not yet been able to step out of content, your mind, thought, or anything to identify with. But if it feels just a sense of goodness and rightness of being here, that means that dimension that has no form is already arising. It's the sky, the spacious sky.

We are here to find or to realize it's already there, the spacious sky within. You can't say, look, there it is, or over here, or look, it's over there. But truly, I tell you, the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of spaciousness is within you and it's without.

And it is essentially who you are. You begin to realize that within you there's not just a succession of thoughts, there is also a space there in between thoughts and behind the thoughts. And that space is there when you realize that sometimes you're actually not thinking.

You don't even have to try. Everybody who feels drawn to this has already at least had glimpses of that within which is not thought, just spacious awareness. It frees you from spending the rest of your life in that awful prison of your mind.

As spaciousness comes into a life, things still happen in your daily life. Challenges still happen. Things go wrong.

You lose something or something is taken away or something arrives that you don't really want. These things still happen. That's okay.

But against the background of spaciousness and you're not totally trapped in every thought that arises, not identified with every thought that arises, and more and more you become aware of space. This is really what the spiritual term detachment that's been around for a while. True detachment, which in some traditions they tell you you must become detached from the things of the world, and spiritual practitioners have

been trying to do that by detaching themselves from their normal surroundings, becoming renunciates.

Of course that in itself does not mean that you have really detached. True detachment is an inner non-identification with form. Non-identification primarily with mental formations that arise continuously.

And more and more you become the awareness in which they arise. You are that already. You're the awareness, the space, the sky, and there are the clouds, and there's the drama.

You may still experience some around you because that's what humans generate. You don't feed into it anymore. You don't contribute more drama to it.

So there's a certain change happens even in the realm of form as this inner shift happens from form identification, mind identification, to being the awareness that affects even the world of form. The world of form will never become absolutely satisfying. It's not even meant to be satisfying.

It's only meant to awaken you. In some ways you could even say the world of form is meant to frustrate you in order to awaken you. And once you've awakened, the world of form is actually quite a pleasant realm because you don't need it anymore for your identity or your fulfillment.

You become peaceful. Confucius talks about benevolence, which is an inner quality, metta, goodwill, benevolence, loving-kindness. The Dalai Lama talks about it.

He didn't say, my religion is Buddhism. He said, my religion is kindness. So it is a quality in a human being that is in many humans only potential that arises from non-identification with the mind.

It arises out of that spaciousness. Benevolence is a word, of course, that comes from Latin. Bene means good.

Volence is willing. It's good will towards the other. This is in the New Testament, is called love.

In the Greek, agape, not the love of the ego, but the love that is benevolence, goodwill. That comes then only out of that spaciousness, not out of thought. And that changes the world, really, when loving-kindness comes in between human beings, then that becomes part of the collective.

Entities like nations interact. It must start with the individual, that quality arising in the individual. You can see the unconsciousness, perhaps, in the other person.

That's not what they are. That is not their identity. That is what they have inherited in

the course of human evolution, the unconsciousness that we inherit.

Spaciousness, the gap between two thoughts, for example, now. So instead of bringing it about, realizing that it's there already, ah, well, that doesn't give much food to the ego anymore because then there's nothing I can attain if it's there already. So the ego has nothing to do there anymore.

So a wonderful thing that you can all find in your own life now, and most of you already do, is to realize that there's no need to be engaged in continuous thinking. Naturally, the state of awareness arises in you. Just look for it.

It's a good thing to start and end this by looking around wherever you happen to be before you close your eyes. So you just become comfortable with wherever you are, and you're beginning to step out of thought. Close your eyes, and what helps is to take a few breaths into the abdomen.

That can put you in touch easily with the entire energy field of the inner body. As you breathe in, the abdomen expands a little. Then you hold it, the end of the in-breath for two or three seconds.

Feel the energy expanding then throughout the body, and then you breathe out, and in again. And you follow the breath with your attention. This is the ancient breath awareness practice.

You can't be thinking at the same time and follow the breath with your attention. That's why it's such a good practice. You become aware of your body, the inner body, the aliveness.

Now gradually you feel that the awareness of the inner body, the aliveness of the inner body, and the inner body become a single thing or single no-thing. So you merge with the sense of aliveness and stillness. Instead of observing it, you feel that you are it, and it is awake.

You may still have remnants of visual image of the body, but it's not necessary anymore. Just focus on that sense of all-pervasive presence that is not other than you, that is essentially you, that is the essence of who you are, that is the I before it becomes something. Just pure presence.

There is a meditation that starts with the question, Who am I? The answer is not to be found in thought or in words. The answer is this, the presence that you sense.

You sense yourself as the presence. That's the answer to Who am I? A criterion for success in this practice is sense of enjoyment or joy.

We could call it the joy of being. Not being anything in particular, just being. Eventually

you encounter a state, this deep sense of beingness, of I.

It cannot be improved upon. Nothing needs to be added to it. It doesn't get any better than this, to use a common expression.

This moment, being conscious of being, feeling your connectedness with the source of all life, from which the consciousness emanates, the consciousness that you are, that realization is the very fulfillment of your life in this moment. What is there to add to it? On the level of being, you're already complete.

There's nothing that you need to become. There's nothing missing. There may be things missing on the human level, the human dimension, but not on the being level.

There's nothing missing. You don't need time to become anything. That's the fullness of life that Jesus talked about, or the emptiness that Buddha talks about.

Spaciousness is a better word for it. Inner spaciousness. Then as you open your eyes and look around the room again, continue to feel the stillness or the spaciousness within, you realize the possibility of being present within and without.

[Speaker 2] (3:07:55 - 3:08:11)

True by Stephen McNamara. Copyright belongs to Eckhart Teachings, Inc. 2020.

Phonographic rights belong to Eckhart Teachings, Inc. 2020. Sounds true.

Waking up the world.